



# MONTEREY NEWS

April 2001  
VOLUME XXXI · Number 4



## The Town

### Separate Board of Health Approved

In what might be the shortest Town Meeting in Monterey history, the Town voted on March 2 to establish a separate Board of Health. Until now, the Select Board also functions as the Board of Health. Muriel Lazzarini of the Monterey Select Board was the only person who spoke at the poorly attended (44 voters) meeting. She noted that the current Board of Health has been committed, attending numerous seminars and workshops. Because of their dual role, they brought more authority and more clout to the

situation, successfully intervening with the Commonwealth on the occasion of outrageous demands of the regulations. The question would be whether separation of the boards would be of benefit to the Town of Monterey. She noted that she supports the article because the Select Board does not have the time to do what needs to be done for both boards. There is only a short-term invulnerability, however, and by separating the boards there will be the possibility of more inclusion in Town government. The success of the new board will be dependent, however, on the new members willingness to serve,

to learn from the members who have been on the board, whose help will be freely offered, and to take on the focused responsibility of the new board.

There was no other discussion. The voice vote was unanimous in favor of approving this article.

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

The Board of Health will be composed of three members elected for three years each, except that the initial elections will elect one member for one year, one member for two years, and one member for three years.





## Salt on the Roads

Dick Tryon met with the Board to express his concerns about the overuse of sand and salt on Town roads. His concerns are that the overuse of salt may create more frost heaves in the roads and adversely impact the environment.

## Conservation Commission

Tim Lovett was appointed to the Conservation Commission for a term expiring June 30, 2001. Lovett's appointment fills a vacancy created by the resignation of Deborah Mielke.

## Informational Meeting

An informational meeting to discuss the articles on this year's annual Town Meeting warrant has been tentatively scheduled for Friday, April 27, 7:00 p.m., at the Firehouse.

— Suzanne Hoppenstedt

## CHARLES J. FERRIS Attorney at Law



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## May 5 Town Election Slate

No offices are being contested in this year's Town election. The following candidates have been endorsed by both the Democratic and Republican Parties (Inc. indicates incumbent):

Board of Appeals (5 years)

Robert M. Gauthier (D) (Inc.)

Board of Assessors (3 years)

Gerry Shapiro (D) (Inc.)

Cemetery Committee (3 years)

Rudolph J. Gero (U) (Inc.)

Constable (3 years)

Raymond W. Tryon (D) (Inc.)

Finance Committee (3 years)

George Emmons (R) (Inc.)

Library Trustee (3 years) Vote for two.

Anne M. Makuc (R) (Inc.)

William Marsh (U) (Inc.)

Library Trustee (2 years)

Carol Edelman (D)

Moderator (1 year)

Mark J. J. Makuc (R) (Inc.)

Park Commission (3 years)

Denise E. Andrus (U) (Inc.)

Planning Board (5 years)

Jonathan E. Sylbert (D) (Inc.)

Select Board (3 years)

Peter S. Brown (R) (Inc.)

Tax Collector (3 years)

Henry J. Makuc (D) (Inc.)

Treasurer (3 years)

Patricia K. Mielke (U) (Inc.)

Tree Warden (1 year)

Roger C. Tryon (D) (Inc.)

Board of Health (3 years)

Robert A. Lazzarini (D)

Board of Health (2 years)

Stephen J. Enoch (R)

Board of Health (1 year)

Kathie A. Tryon (U)

## Candidates for Board of Health

Below are letters from the three candidates running for the new three-member Board of Health, which was established as a separate board from the Select Board at the March 2 special Town Meeting. In this initial election of the board, one member will be elected for three years, one for two years, and one for one year, so that their terms will be staggered. After these initial terms expire, all members will be elected for three-year terms. These candidates are endorsed by both the Republican and Democratic Parties.

### Robert A. Lazzarini (3-year term)

I am writing to express my interest in being a candidate for the three-year term on the Monterey Board of Health. For some time I have looked for ways that I might contribute to our town. Changes in Monterey's bylaws at the special Town Meeting on March 2 prompt me to be a candidate because I believe that as a member of the Board of Health I could make that contribution to the well-being of Monterey.

My training and forty years of experience in biomedical research and administration gives me an uncommon background and knowledge to apply to the problems confronting the Board of Health. I conducted research on viruses and bacteria at the National Institutes of Health for twenty-five years, first as a staff scientist, then as Chief of the Laboratory of Medicine (NY) to establish and be the Founding Director of the Brookdale Center for Developmental and Molecular Biology.

Although we are relative newcomers by most standards, my family and I are

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devoted to Monterey. We discovered Monterey thirteen years ago, bought our home here twelve years ago, and my wife and family began living here full-time ten years ago. For myself, I am semi-retired and spend halftime in Monterey (currently Thursdays through Sunday), but expect to completely retire soon and reside full-time in Monterey. However, in the interim, my time is quite flexible, and I don't foresee any difficulties in taking on the responsibilities of this office.

I hope that you will look favorably on my candidacy.

#### **Stephen Enoch (2-year term)**

I would like to express my interest in running for the two-year term of the Board of Health. I have lived in Monterey since the fall of 1992. My desire to become more active in assuring that Monterey continues to thrive as a healthy community stems from the same principle of service that brought me here.

Upon completion of undergraduate school, where I studied Psychology and Music Therapy, it was my wish to enter into volunteer service. Through the Brethren Volunteer Service I worked for a childcare center in Belfast, Northern Ireland, and I worked as a volunteer at Gould Farm where I am presently employed. The capacity of my employment at Gould Farm has focused around food production and food safety. As part of this role in food safety, I have recently passed my National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation of ServSafe Food Protection Manager Certificate Examination.

My education, service, and work have all focused on enhancing the well-being of individuals. Now I would like to have the opportunity to serve Monterey in enhancing the well-being of our community.

#### **Kathie Tryon (1-year term)**

I'd like to inform you of my interest in the one-year term for the Board of Health position. I am a lifelong resident of Monterey and love this community very much. For the past twenty years I have worked in the public sector as a Community Nurse.

Here is my professional experience:

- I am a Registered Nurse who has been working in Berkshire County for 20 years. For 15 years I worked as a Visiting Nurse, part of that Visiting Nurse position was Public Health which included but was not limited to flu clinics, immunizations and health teaching.
- I have had 3 years of supervisory and teaching experience in the nursing field.
- Presently I have my own private nursing practice providing "visiting nurse type" services in the community.
- In my professional experience I have had to develop good communication skills and an ability to work closely problem solving with groups and individuals dealing with a wide range of very difficult issues from child and elderly abuse, death and dying, economic issues, lack of medical insurance, unsafe housing and safety, to mention only a few.

Because of my interest in our community I would like to offer my experience, time, and commitment to the Board of Health and the Town of Monterey.

## **McLaughlin-Wilson Scholarship Applications**

The Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation is accepting applications for this year's McLaughlin-Wilson Scholarships through May 1. Graduating high school seniors or college undergraduate students who have been residents of Monterey for at least the last two years of high school are eligible to apply. Previous winners of the scholarship are also invited to reapply for continuing support if they are enrolled in a continuing higher education program. Grants usually range from \$2,000 to \$7,500.

The McLaughlin-Wilson Scholarship Fund was established in 1994 by a bequest from Edith Wilson as a resource for the residents of Monterey. Applicants will be reviewed by a committee of five residents of Monterey, based on the combined criteria of academic achievement, efforts and ambitions to achieve academic and life goals, financial need, and community service.

Application forms are available at the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation (800/969-2823), from high school guidance offices, and at the Monterey Town Hall. Completed applications must be received at the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation by May 1, 2001.

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## To Salt or Not to Salt

The issue of salt use on Town roads has been a "hot" item of late. The cause of concern is the use of the agent sodium chloride to keep our paved roads safe to travel. The word "safe" is the salient point in our use of highway salt.

During the winter of 1998-99 the Select Board, in an attempt to understand why Monterey roads appeared to be not as safe to travel or in as good condition as those of our neighbors, sought the advice of experts at the Massachusetts Highway Department at the District 1 headquarters in Lenox. They agreed to share with us the details and specifics of their operational requirements in a meeting with some of their supervisory personnel. The Board and several citizens attended that meeting and learned much about how the Commonwealth prepares for and manages a snow and ice storm event. While some of what we learned was of limited application in Monterey, we came away with some rather eye-opening facts, as well as an awareness that we had much more to learn.

Subsequently, the Select Board, the Highway Superintendent and at least two other interested citizens attended a seminar on dealing with snow and ice, given by the Bay State Roads Program in Pittsfield. Attendance at a similar seminar in Northampton in the fall of 2000 reinforced our learning from the previous year.

Our training and investigations have led us to the following conclusions:

- that we had much more to learn;
- that we were using far less salt than most all our neighbors;
- that sand has never yet melted one atom of snow or ice;
- that sand is a pollutant and has a cost beyond that of purchase, and still needs to be picked up in the springtime;
- that we are at the beginning of a learning curve leading to the efficient use of salt and/or other chemicals;
- that the time to begin was yesterday;
- that if we are to embark on a heavier reliance on chemicals, we need to make an investment in machinery to safely and efficiently put the chemical on the road and not in a ditch;
- that we need to make an investment in training our Highway Department crew to use both the equipment and the chemical(s) properly and efficiently.

We have been visited by sales agents of at least two different application systems. One factor that soon became apparent was that although the machinery was different, the science was the same. Our Highway crew needs to know how to judge the proper application rates in order to apply chemicals efficiently. They need to know the road-surface temperature, the air temperature, the rate of snowfall or ice fall, and the chemical properties of the material to be applied. Obviously there was and is much data to analyze and react to. We have invested in equipment that

reduces the way our two largest vehicles spread salt. We still need to equip one additional truck. We also need to learn more about using the prewetting of chemicals before they hit the road. Both of these will be an important part of our new Highway and Building Superintendent's responsibility over the next several years.

We are committed to keeping Monterey's roads as safe as possible. We are no less committed to making sure that our chemical use is carefully monitored and safely administered. This is not a short-term commitment. We are open to your comments and more than willing to discuss our plans and results with any of you who are concerned. While we are assured that we are going in the right direction, we entertain no doubt that we have yet to achieve perfection. We ask for your support and your input.

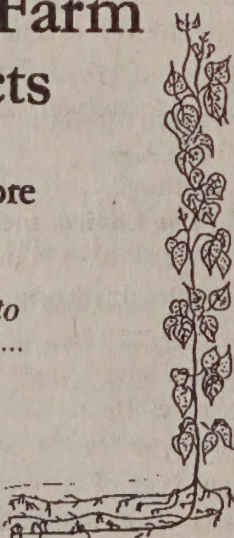
We are also interested in your thoughts about frost heaves, which are noticeably present this year. We have heard some speculation about the causes, and will continue to research the question of possible effects from the use of salt. It is obvious that the temperatures have been much colder this winter, and there is evidence that a higher-than-usual level of groundwater may be the cause of the frost heaves; but first we need to understand all the possibilities before ruling in or out a number of potential causes. Please bear with us, and please drive safely and sanely!

— Peter S. Brown, Chair  
Monterey Select Board

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Glynis Oliver

## Cost of Well-Salted Roads

This letter is in response to Ms. Hoppenstedt's query regarding the use of road salt in the February *Monterey News*. I don't normally respond by taking a pen to paper in such instances, first of all because it's too much like doing an essay for English class (not a pleasant memory), and secondly because it never amounts to anything worthwhile. I am, however, making an exception this time to inform the readers of certain facts, because knowledge brings with it responsibility. Forget it or ignore it as you chose, but you have been informed.

As an employee of the Monterey Highway Department for many years, I have seen a dramatic shift in policy regarding the use of road salt over the years. While everyone has their own agenda I think it's safe to say that the

safety of the motoring public is the number one concern of the Select Board and of the Highway Department. Chief Backhaus reports fewer accidents in Monterey this winter season than in the past. But as one who travels Monterey's roads extensively, I can with certainty say that if there have been fewer accidents it isn't because people are not trying. A report on NBC's *Date-line* recently gave the number one cause of accidents while driving in winter conditions as being "vehicle speed too fast for existing road conditions." So Slow Down! An accident is going to make you later and mess up your day more than driving 10 to 15 m.p.h. slower.

Another reason that many people experience difficulty in driving in winter conditions, in my opinion, is that they have inadequate tires on their

vehicles. A good set of snow tires is well worth the money spent and the time to change them over (off in the spring and on in the fall). The "all season tire" in New England, simply put, is a misnomer.

People's safety would be greatly enhanced if they would simply adjust their driving to the existing weather and road conditions. No amount of money or resources spent by any governmental agency can make people drive sensibly. On February 7, 2001, a town snowplow engaged in snow removal operation was hit by a car whose driver couldn't get by fast enough. In fact the driver couldn't even take the time to stop after the collision (minor damage to the truck, significant damage to the car). If you see a car missing a mirror on the passenger side, it may be the one.

The initial objection many people have to using a lot of road salt may be

termed sticker shock. Salt Is Expensive! This year the winning bid for supplying Monterey with road salt (Berkshire County bid) was around 33 dollars per ton — an expense you and I as taxpayers pay. J. Donovan & Son was awarded the sand bid at around eight dollars per ton. Salt is most effective between 32 degrees Fahrenheit and 20 degrees Fahrenheit; below that it still does work but it takes much more salt to melt the same amount of snow or ice.

Now come the hidden cost or costs not readily apparent or considered when using salt:

### 1. Accelerated Deterioration of Equipment Used in Salt Application:

Salt combined with moisture is extremely corrosive. Even though Highway Department trucks and equipment are washed frequently, this corrosion has increased with the increased use of road salt. This in turn necessitates more repairs (more money being spent from the machinery and tools account) and an accelerated replacement schedule for Highway Department trucks and equipment. The bottom line is the taxpayer's pay again.

### 2. Private Vehicles Traveling on Salted Public Ways Also Experience Accelerated Deterioration:

(I call it highway cancer.) The shiny exterior, although being what everyone notices, is not the major concern. The underneath, between the cracks and crevices, the working components are affected, which again means more repairs and sooner replacement. If you buy a new vehicle every couple of years, don't worry about it. If you keep your vehicle longer or buy a used vehicle, guess what, you get to pay again.

### 3. The Environmental Cost:

A. Water Pollution: Salt is water soluble; this leads to rivers and streams with increased salt content. In short, the pH balance is upset. Fish and other wildlife are affected. Freshwater fish for the most part cannot survive in salt water (put a cup of salt in your fish tank and see what happens). Salmon seem to be the exception. Years ago the Berkshire Fish



Hatchery was involved in a project to reintroduce salmon to the Connecticut River. I believe the program had some success. Know anyone who has caught a salmon in the Konkapot River or Lake Garfield? I don't.

**B. Ground Water Pollution: Wells and Aquifers** are also affected. Residents with private wells for their water source along heavily salted routes in other communities in New England have experienced salt contamination of their wells. While some salt is necessary for healthy living, an excessive salt intake can have very negative health consequences. Do you drink only bottled water and use your domestic water only for cleaning and bathing? Medical studies have shown that bathing in polluted water is more hazardous than drinking it because of the skin's ability to absorb chemicals. (It seems the body's reaction is more immediate if you drink it.) Sodium Chloride (salt) is a chemical. Rivers and streams will cleanse themselves in a relatively short period of time if contaminants are kept from entering them. Groundwater systems take a lot longer.

**C. Plant and Animal Life:** This area we live in is known for its variety and abundance of flora and fauna. Pollution from outside this area is already affecting sensitive plants and animals. Certain lakes in the Adirondacks are "dead" from pollution and acid rain. Maple sugar producers in New England have noticed a decline in maple tree health and in the sugar content of maple sap in recent decades. It takes 40 to 80 gallons (or more) of sap to make 1 gallon of maple syrup; less sugar content in maple sap means more gallons need to be boiled down to make that precious gallon of syrup. Other species of trees and plants are also seen to be less productive and more prone to disease and blight. Experts have noticed plants seem to be having difficulty producing the plant sugars necessary for healthy living. While no hard and fast conclusions have been drawn, the suspect is air pollution, particularly acid rain. Make no mistake, salt is acidic. (Why do you think it causes metal to corrode?)

Water, plants, animals, humans, air — it's all one big ecosystem. What we as humans do has far-reaching conse-

quences. Not only do we, the taxpayers, pay now, but our children will also pay in the future.

#### **4. Accelerated Road Deterioration:**

Everyone has noticed the problem with frost heaves this year. While there are a number of factors that come into play in creating frost heaves, the use of salt is a significant contributing factor. All snow having been melted off the road surface enables the cold to drive the frost in deeper. (A little snow insulates a lot.)

Soon will come pothole season as melting snows enter the cracks in the road surface caused by the frost heaves, refreezes, and breaks out pieces of asphalt surface. I expect a substantial pothole season.

The corrosiveness of salt also affects bridges and culverts made of metal. Monterey has several bridges in serious need of repair (River Road, Curtis Road, and New Marlborough Road). Even the new wooden bridge Massachusetts Highway is installing on Gould Road is held together with metal bolts. Again you and I as taxpayers get to pay.

#### **5. Monterey Does Not Have Adequate Salt Storage Facilities:**

The building being used presently was not designed or built for salt storage. It has been reinforced and repaired in recent years but still the walls are bulging. The building is inadequate in size to hold the quantity of salt necessary to have

on hand to combat the sometimes severe weather conditions in the Berkshires. Thirdly, the building is located within fifty feet of a well (I don't drink that water) and within one hundred yards of a wetland and other water point sources. Salt spilling from the building combines with melting snow and rain and runs where? Downhill to the wetland. Trucks delivering salt have to dump their loads outside. (They're too big to dump inside.) Then the salt gets pushed inside with the Town loader. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts had a program of providing salt storage sheds to towns needing them. The Town had to send in an application which reportedly was done. Tyringham received their salt storage shed. New Marlborough received theirs. Other surrounding towns have received theirs. In talking casually with a Massachusetts DPW official a couple of years ago, he stated that the salt shed program was ending because all the towns that had applied had received storage facilities. It seems that Monterey has slipped through the cracks and Town taxpayers are caught in one when it comes to paying for adequate salt storage in town.

In conclusion, as of March 13, 2001, 1657 tons of road salt had been used on Monterey roads this year. By the time you read this in print most of the "salt season" will be over for this year, with no need to concern yourself until you see your vehicle turning white next year.

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However there is a lot more to having bare roads to drive upon than simply ordering road salt, applying it to the road, and paying the salt company when the bill comes. The monetary cost of maintaining bare roads to drive on is quite high. Human life and health, on the other hand, are priceless. Police, fire, and medical personnel would be overjoyed if they never had to respond to a motor vehicle accident in Monterey again; unfortunately I'm sure they will, and it's easy to blame the weather or road conditions rather than the one who was pushing on the accelerator pedal. The fact is that as long as it is storming in New England, driving conditions are going to be less than ideal regardless of how much time, money, or other resources are brought to bear, so adjust your lifestyle and driving to the weather conditions. The Highway Department will do what it can to make your driving safe and enjoyable. If there is a problem let us know (we can't be everywhere all the time). But be aware the Highway Department does not make policy. If you think too much salt is being used, or if you think more salt should be used, policy is made in the white building in the center of town near the Konkapot River. Personally I could do with a lot less salt.

P.S. Regarding Storrs Olds' and John Humphrey's comments in the March *Monterey News*, Amen! One thing though, simply because a person can buy a four-wheel-drive vehicle doesn't mean that he or she knows how to drive it. The biggest problem with sport utility vehicles (4x4's) is the nut behind the wheel (My Opinion).

— Lyman Thomson

## MONTEREY LIBRARY

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## Earth Day Clothing and Textile Drive

To help celebrate the 31st anniversary of Earth Day, the Center for Ecological Technology (CET), in partnership with Goodwill Industries of the Berkshires, will hold its sixth annual Used Clothing and Textile Drive to collect, reuse, and recycle old clothing and household textiles. The drive will take place on Saturday, April 21, and Sunday, April 22, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. This year clothing should be brought to Goodwill Industries, 158 Tyler Street, in Pittsfield or to one of the regional drop-off sites listed below.

"The amount of materials we collect during the textile drive has become too substantial for CET's parking lot," said Jamie Cahillane, Waste Management Specialist at CET. "We decided to have the collection at Goodwill Industries facility on Tyler Street because of the availability of additional space and the increased efficiency in handling materials."

Last year's textile drive collected over 25 tons of materials from drop off sites throughout Berkshire County. Goodwill resells the wearable clothing at its local stores and sends the remainder to the textile market. Additionally, Goodwill uses the collection, sorting, and retail sales as job training for individuals with barriers to employment. Last year, Goodwill provided services to 112 individuals in six different programs. The event is coordinated with assistance from the Southern Berkshire Solid Waste Management District and the Tri-Town Health Department (Lee, Lenox and Stockbridge).

All types of clothing are accepted, including sweaters, shirts, skirts, pants, jackets, overcoats and raincoats. Blankets, gloves, socks, paired shoes, sheets,

towels, curtains, and fabric scraps are also acceptable. Clothing can be torn and stained but must be clean, dry, and delivered in plastic bags. Rugs and carpeting will not be accepted. CET's main goals for this drive are to provide education about reuse and recycling to the Berkshire community.

"The number of households, community organizations, and businesses continue to increase each year" said Alan Silverstein, CET Co-Director. "Our partnership with Goodwill allows for many of the textiles collected to remain in Berkshire County and provide a local opportunity for reuse and job creation, an integral part of Goodwill's mission."

Expanded drop-off sites located around the county will remain this year to make it easier for Berkshire County residents to participate in the textile collection effort. To date, the following sites have been confirmed.

Great Barrington sites and drop-off schedules include: Mama's Earth Environmental General Store, 87 Railroad Street (April 19-21, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.); and Uncommon Grounds, 403 Stockbridge Road (April 9-22, M-F, 7:30 a.m.-5 p.m., Sat. 8 a.m.-5 p.m., and Sun. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.).

Additional South County sites include: United Church of Christ, Main Street, Monterey, (April 21, 1 p.m.-7 p.m., April 22nd, 9 a.m.-7 a.m.); New Marlborough Town Office, (April 18 and 19, 7 a.m.-4 p.m.); Tri-Town Health Department, 45 Railroad Street, Lee (April 16-22, 7 a.m.-4 p.m.); and Crispina Designs, 170 Front St., Housatonic, (April 16-20, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., April 21, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.).

For more information on the Textile Drive, please call Alyssa Nelson or Jamie Cahillane at CET, 413/445-4556 or 1-800-238-1221.

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Christopher Blair



# Monterey Fire Department Activities, Training, Events

The Fire Department responded to the following calls in February:

Building Fire (mutual aid to Sandisfield) .....	1
Medical Asst. (back up to E.M.S. team) .....	1
Vehicle Accident (injury medical response) .....	2
Smoke Incident (locate source and remove) .....	1
Public Service (citizen assistance) .....	1
Good Intent Call (communication error) .....	1
Alarm Malfunction (faulty transmission) .....	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>

However March came in like a lion, with a blizzard making a response to the New England Log Homes fire in Great Barrington, already complicated being at a potentially contaminated site, even more difficult. This was the second major old mill fire emergency involving Monterey firefighters this year.

March 7, as the first Wednesday of the month, brought an important training meeting at the Firehouse, even as equipment used in the Log Homes fire, such as

protective clothing and water hoses, were still drying out. The evening was devoted to Emergency Medical Certification drills, required by the Commonwealth every six months. The process simulates actual situations that each member might be confronted with. Our two Emergency Medical Captains are in charge for these tests, which lay out a difficult medical response gauntlet for each firefighter, including the Chief, to correctly navigate.

The realism of these drills is enhanced by modern equipment such as a practice defibrillator that electronically monitors the vital signs of a victim, although unable to generate a real electric shock. Both the practice and the real unit can tell from the signs whether activation is advised, and both have the capacity to block it in case of human error. Also it is never administered to children eight years old or younger, anyone under eighty pounds, never in a moving vehicle, nor near water or a wet person. Captain Del Martin reviewed the basic principles during each simulated response. The first four of a long evening are listed below.

Situation: A fireman arriving first



Glynnis Oliver

at a home and finding an unconscious infant, with no pulse or breathing; what to do to determine origin of condition and appropriate treatment.

Situation: Car accident with complicated injuries requiring electronic Fairview Emergency monitoring of treatment.

Situation: Lake Buell boat ramp drowning incident; how to render victim safe to receive defibrillation.

Situation: Snowmobile collision, one person suffering a concussion and another experiencing chest pains.

On a more pleasant subject of future events, the Monterey Cultural Council and the Firehouse Dancers announce a Memorial Day weekend "U.S.O. style" dessert dance on Saturday, May 26, 7:30-11:00 p.m. The cost is \$35 per couple for an evening of entertainment, dancing, and fun, featuring great music with The Carlin Big Band.

— George Emmons



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## Literacy Network Offering Expanded Training for Volunteer Tutors

The Southern Berkshire Literacy Network (SBLN), a one-on-one adult literacy program based at the Lee Library on Main Street, is offering a hands-on, four-session training for volunteers wishing to learn how to teach adults basic reading, basic math, GED preparation, English as a Second Language, and citizenship exam preparation. In addition, tutors will get hands-on practice in adult education classes, held nightly at Searles Middle School.

The workshops will begin *Monday, April 30*, and end *Tuesday, May 8*. All sessions are free and will be held at the Berkshire Community College's Great Barrington campus from 6 to 9 p.m. Space is limited, and those interested should call 413/243-0471 or e-mail [kamash@aol.com](mailto:kamash@aol.com) by April 23 to register. SBLN Education Director Karen Shreefter noted, "The primary qualifications for being a tutor are: patience, attendance at trainings, and a commitment to your student."

The *Monday, April 30*, workshop is entitled "What is SBLN & the Adult as Learner," and will look at why SBLN was created, how it works and the challenges and rewards of tutoring adult learners.

This session will be led by SBLN co-founders, Zoë Dalheim and Peg Smith, and Shreefter. In 1978, Dalheim founded and became director of The Learning Connection in Pittsfield, an organization offering information and referral, reading assessment and tutoring for dyslexic adults. She also has filled the roles of coordinator, researcher, and teacher at Project READ. A learning disabilities specialist, Smith is co-author of numerous resources for adult learners and those who work with them.

On *Tuesday, May 1*, Dalheim and Smith will discuss "The Structure of English & Teaching Reading." This session will examine the 80 percent of English that follows rules and teaching of reading, and it will also provide an overview of learning disabilities.

The third session on *Monday, May 7*, will be lead by Jean Leuchtenberger and is entitled "Learning Materials Review & Teaching Beginning ESOL." This session will look at SBLN's learning materials and discuss how to help students prepare for the GED exam (high school equivalency exam) and where to begin when teaching English to adults with little or no English. Leuchtenberger is a long-time SBLN tutor as well as the former coordinator of an ESOL school in Peru.

The training concludes on *Tuesday, May 8*, when ESOL specialist Kelly

Jourdain will lead a workshop entitled "Teaching Advanced English As a Second Language." Jourdain has directed adult literacy programs in Lee and currently coordinates the adult literacy program in Great Barrington.

Founded a decade ago, the SBLN program trains and provides volunteer tutors to teach adults reading, math, English as a Second Language, and GED (high school equivalency diploma) preparations. The last census showed about 4,000 adults in South County had no high school diploma. Each year over 100 adult learners use SBLN's free service for both native-born and immigrant adult students with a range of skills and needs. Some are afraid of losing jobs because their limited reading, writing, and math skills have not kept pace with the increasing demands of the workplace. Others are unable to fill out job applications. SBLN tutors also help immigrants improve their English and prepare for citizenship.

For more information about the Southern Berkshire Literacy Network or to register by April 23, call SBLN at (413) 243-0471 or e-mail [kamash@aol.com](mailto:kamash@aol.com).

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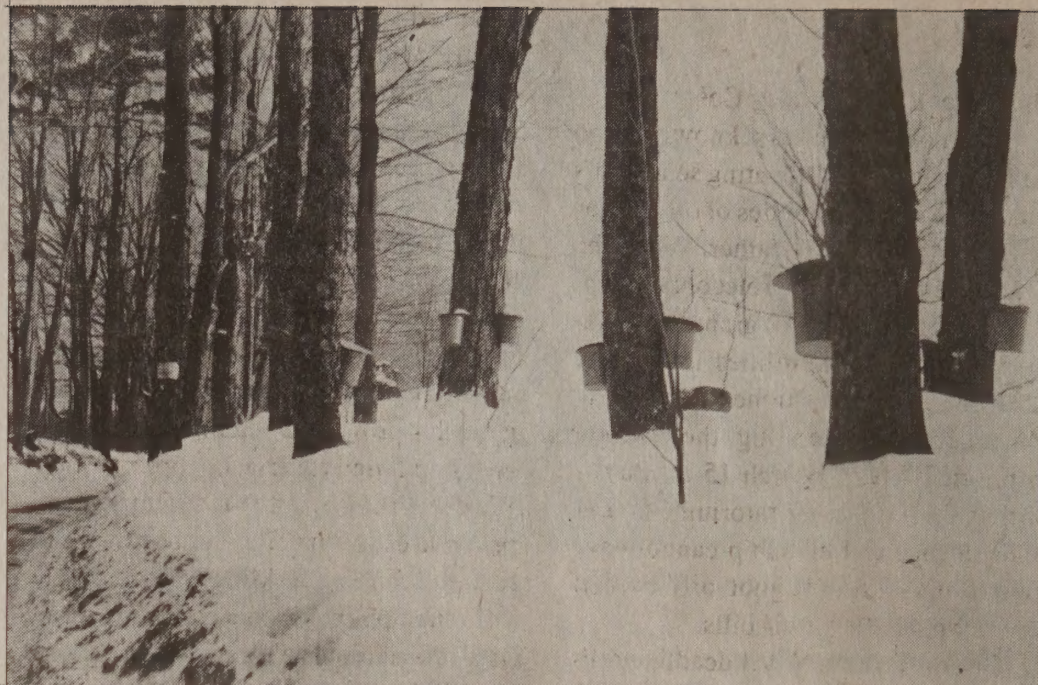
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## Rep Rap

The genetic engineering of food is a recent development in our ever-expanding world of technological growth. Genetic engineering is a process that takes a gene or genes from one organism such as a plant, animal, or bacterium and splices them into another in order, for example, to improve crops. The most common forms of gene splicing intend to make crops more resistant to weather and insects. However in recent years chemical companies and agricultural businesses have begun selling genetically engineered seeds to farmers for crop production.

Glynis Oliver



Scientists are very concerned about the potential health risks resulting from genetically engineered foods that are produced via these seeds. Proven health risks from exposure to genetically engineered foods include causing the original plant to develop new toxins which can damage the immune system and vital organs, decreasing antibiotic effectiveness, and triggering food allergies. The environmental risks from genetically engineered foods are toxic pollen that harms other plants and animals, soil contamination, and the creation of super weeds that are unresponsive to herbicides.

The companies involved in agricultural biotechnology are the same companies that manufacture agro-chemicals and

own the nation's largest seed companies. Once farmers buy seeds from these companies they are often obligated to buy pesticides made by the same companies. Increased profits from these seed and pesticide packages have induced companies to aggressively market genetically engineered foods. Approximately 60 percent of processed foods in grocery stores contain genetically engineered ingredients.

Despite the early data on the effects of genetically engineered foods the U.S. Food and Drug Administration doesn't require sufficient safety tests for these

products, because they consider genetically engineered foods similar to their conventional counterparts. As of late, growing concern and evidence has called for safeguards on genetically engineered foods. The recent recall of Taco Bell taco shells has prompted this wake-up call. The company that provided the genetically engineered seeds that produced the corn used in the shells was ordered to pay the farmers who produced the corn up to 25 cents per bushel. The seeds sold by the company was never licensed for human consumption and thus caused severe allergic reactions to many consumers.

In response to these health threats, I have filed a bill relative to the liability for genetically engineered food. It defines what genetically engineered food is and holds those accountable who genetically engineer organisms in a way that violates reasonable safety precautions, resulting in adverse health effects and environmental harm. I fully believe that the industry should be held responsible for the products they produce and insure that they are safe for the public's consumption. The appropriate safeguards that represent good business practices and protect the consumer should accompany the rapid advancement of technology.

As always if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at my district office at (413) 243-0289.

— Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins

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## Senator Says

### Plan Ahead for Heating Costs

As most consumers know all too well, the cost of home heating soared this winter due to tight supplies of oil and gas as well as the harsh weather. When the state's Department of Telecommunications and Energy (DTE) granted rate increases for heating utilities in January 2001, the agency cushioned the blow to consumers by extending the "winter moratorium" from March 15 to May 1. During the winter moratorium, households in financial hardship cannot have their heating utilities shut off, even if they fall behind on their bills.

Before the new May 1 deadline rolls around, however, it is important to think about additional steps you can take to cover your utility bills. Gas companies were required to reopen their "levelized billing plans" when the rate increase was granted. You can sign up for the monthly budget plan regardless of your income and spread your gas costs over the six remaining months of the budget season, paying a set amount each month.

Income-qualified households can obtain fuel assistance through the Community Action Council in their area. The deadline to apply for assistance is March 31, and this deadline was not extended when the winter moratorium was changed. So you must plan ahead if you think you

will need a helping hand with oil, gas, or electric heating costs this season. Call my district office at 413/442-6810 for the name of the Community Action office in your area.

### Your Community Needs Your Green Thumb!

If you are over the age of 55 and fall within an eligible income range, you can serve your community by joining a program that provides training, employment, and community service opportunities. While you're at it, this federally funded program can help you to earn income and to gain job-related skills.

The Green Thumb program began 35 years ago to make use of the "green thumbs" of retired farmers to improve the nation's parks and highways. It quickly evolved into the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) which helps seniors to stay off public assistance and remain productive and independent by providing training and jobs that match their interests. You might find a Green Thumb worker reading to children at the library, running the local blood bank, assisting teachers and students in elementary schools, operating recycling centers, or giving tours in local museums.

Almost 100,000 seniors across the country participate in the program every year. Because wages and benefits are

paid by Green Thumb, employers also gain by hiring Green Thumb/SCSEP seniors. Best of all, because the funds for the program are federal, wages earned through the program are not counted against Social Security payments or income limits for federally subsidized public housing.

If you are interested in more information about Green Thumb, call their Pittsfield field operations coordinator at 413/443-3515.

### An Opportunity for Crafty Seniors

The federal Green Thumb program has launched a web site, Geezer.com, which markets crafts, products, and goods created by senior citizens. The site can help you supplement your income or launch a new business. If you would like to sell items handcrafted, authored, or created by seniors, Geezer.com may be just the ticket. The site is geared toward both individual sellers and organizations (such as your local Council on Aging).

For more information on marketing your products through Geezer.com, log onto the Internet, find the Geezer.com home page, and click on the links at the bottom of the page for "Rules and Fees" and the "Signup Packet." Your local librarian may be able to help you. Or call my district office at 413/442-6810 and I will send printed materials with more information.

— Senator Andrea F. Nuciforo, Jr.



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## Genes

*Sitting here waiting for the train to come  
Sitting waiting for the train to come  
Hear that whistle, it's crossing a road  
Somewhere down the tracks*

*It's a well lit station, really too well lit  
I wish it was a little darker in here  
I'm the only one here at this time of night  
Except for the ticket taker over there*

*I've run out of money in the middle of nowhere  
My credit cards are all defunct  
I'm looking like a stranger even to myself  
I've washed up in too many men's rooms*

*I've lived to tell about all this  
Only because of genes  
Because my mother and father  
lived so long  
I've lived to tell about this only because of genes  
Because my mother and father lived so long*

— Peter Shepley

## Haiku

*Walking in the rain  
a soundable harmony  
flowing in measure.*

\* \* \*

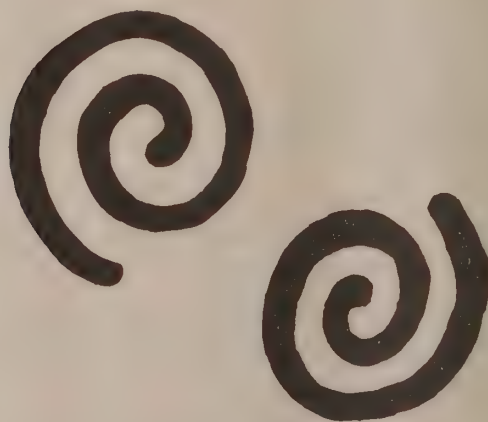
*One dry leaf  
still on the maple tree  
amid new buds.*

— Ann M. LaVallée

## Shadow Blue

*Shadow, at the right hour,  
can elicit great detail  
long blue fingers reaching  
longingly across seas  
of snow, the path obscured  
yet defined in twilight  
lines of the soul, fingers  
snapping, Bobo's Reden-  
tore on the canal  
saxophone solos, ohh . . .  
Maneiri's tones shadow soul  
searching painted profiles  
an architectural  
line and scape defined, each  
as roof and wall, window  
door and dome, chord and tone  
the very mood spired high  
as mountain peaks, the trees  
flat and blue, long against  
the snow, a sea of blue  
itself as shadowed by  
each trillion flake atop  
each trillion other, ohh . . .  
longing is shadow blue  
reaching out from the soul*

(blues in G)  
— R. Zukowski





## Joy

*Dear Lord,  
thank you for a surprising mind  
for I am jubilant with thoughts  
enraptured by images  
emparadised by song  
I close my eyes  
and thoughts scud over  
like the deep fresh winds of spring  
that sing  
shaking colors in the soul*

*Reason tries to tread soberly  
dressed in cypress  
but joys are jonquils  
shy secrets are violets  
hiding under ferns for fun*

*the sun explodes!*

*I close my ears  
deafened by tongues of love  
singing, heaven knows what, above  
anthems celebrating some great thing  
bells ring in tumbling carillons of gold*

*I close my lips  
words come crowding down like children  
in blue and white ribbons  
skipping three steps at a time  
wanting out to shout and thunder*

*and, in my hand, held tight  
and burning bright  
the Godstone: wonder!*

— A. O. Howell

## Age of Wonderment

*I took my grandson for a walk today  
Along a country road where wild flowers grow.  
He touched the blossoms with his baby hands  
And, through his wonderment, I understand  
There are so many things he wants to know.  
I picked a daisy white for him to hold.  
He held it choicely and I knew it pleased.  
He watched the branches high above his head  
As summer breezes played among the leaves.  
Dear little boy, so innocent and good,  
May you through childhood have your share of fun  
And cruel war be banished from the earth  
Before you are old enough to fire a gun.*

— Eleanor Kimberley

## At Dusk

*In deep soft snow three white-tailed deer  
climb up the hill, attempt to graze.  
By winter's will find meager fare;  
yet dignified, they move with ease.  
As shadows fall, the woods beyond  
will shelter them. Do they enjoy  
this snow-upholstered wonderland?  
I doubt it; but, then, who's to say?  
Slowing now, still their advance  
disperses powder, leaves dim tracks.  
With care they circle around the fence,  
in swirls of snow the chill wind makes.  
What they must see as tedious duty,  
my view imbues with timeless beauty.*

— Edwin Schur



## Mercury Fever

### Thermometer Exchange

The first mercury fever thermometer exchange in Berkshire County will take place at the Children's Health Program (CHP) in Great Barrington during the months of April, May, and June. South Berkshire households participating in the Women, Infants and Children (WIC), Family Support Network, or Early Intervention programs can bring mercury fever thermometers to Children's Health Program, 54 Castle Street, weekdays between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. to exchange for a free digital thermometer. This project is funded by the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation and coordinated by the Center for Ecological Technology (CET) in partnership with CHP, Great Barrington Department of Public Works, and Brooks Pharmacy.

Mercury fever thermometers contain approximately one-half of a gram of mercury, enough to contaminate a small pond. Exposure to the mercury from a broken thermometer can cause severe health problems and is particularly dangerous to fetal development and small children. Mercury is released into the environment when fossil fuels (primary coal) are burned for energy. In Massachusetts, the largest source of mercury pollution is from incineration of products containing mercury that have been thrown away by households or businesses. When trash is incinerated or buried in landfills that may leak, mercury becomes airborne, enters our

waterways and is consumed by fish that we eat.

"Most mercury fever thermometers eventually break," said Joy Kirschenbaum, CET waste-management specialist. "During cleanup, we inevitably breathe the vapors and possibly touch it, both of which can be harmful to our health. However, the most common route of mercury into our bodies is from eating contaminated fish." (See [www.state.ma.us/dph/behafishlist.htm](http://www.state.ma.us/dph/behafishlist.htm) for fish advisories).

According to Ms. Kirschenbaum, purchasing digital or Geratherm thermometers is one step in the right direction, as long as the button batteries in digital models are recycled. Several chain stores, including Brooks, CVS, and Wal-Mart, have voluntarily stopped retail sales of mercury fever thermometers. The state of New Hampshire and cities around the country, including Boston, are banning retail sales of mercury fever thermometers. Other legislative work is underway to require products containing mercury to be labeled.

For more information about mercury, or to obtain the free publication "Mercury Thermometers and Your Family's Health," please contact Joy Kirschenbaum at CET, 413/445-4556, 1-800-238-1221, or [joyk@cetonline.org](mailto:joyk@cetonline.org).

CET's work to recycle and reduce both hazardous and nonhazardous waste is also supported by the USDA Rural Development and the Massachusetts Cultural Council. CET is a nonprofit energy/resource conservation and solid waste management organization with offices in Pittsfield and Northampton.

## The Hills Are Alive

If we have been told that 2001 is to be the Chinese Year of the Dragon, let's call it something else, as we see it so far. For seasonal openers how about a white bear of a winter and a grizzly bear on Wall Street. With falling flakes and averages, our roofs were decorated with frosting, while down below furnaces burned energy long through the night. But with investments melting down, our environmental glasses were half full, when blizzards covered up wild bird food in our meadows, hedgerows, and hillsides, bringing songbirds back to our feeders to cheer us up. The greatest numbers in February were both gold and purple finches attacking quantities of oil sunflower seed, and leaving behind droppings of shelled black husks, as a sign of hard times.

When I was turning on the back-porch light on the night of a storm, I saw the puffed-up figures of juncos that had come in under the roof, hopping about out of the precipitation in the shelter between the woodpile and chimney corner. The next morning the storm continued, and they stayed on. When the sun finally came out, some of the most cheerful notes were sung by chickadees, as they cavorted in the branches of our beech tree, whose leaves even now cling to the past season. But day by day as the hand of winter loses its grip, they come to rest in a footprint along the walk.

Many small birds are around all winter, even though we don't see them, and in mid-February I have seen flocks of robins in the thickets of the wetlands around

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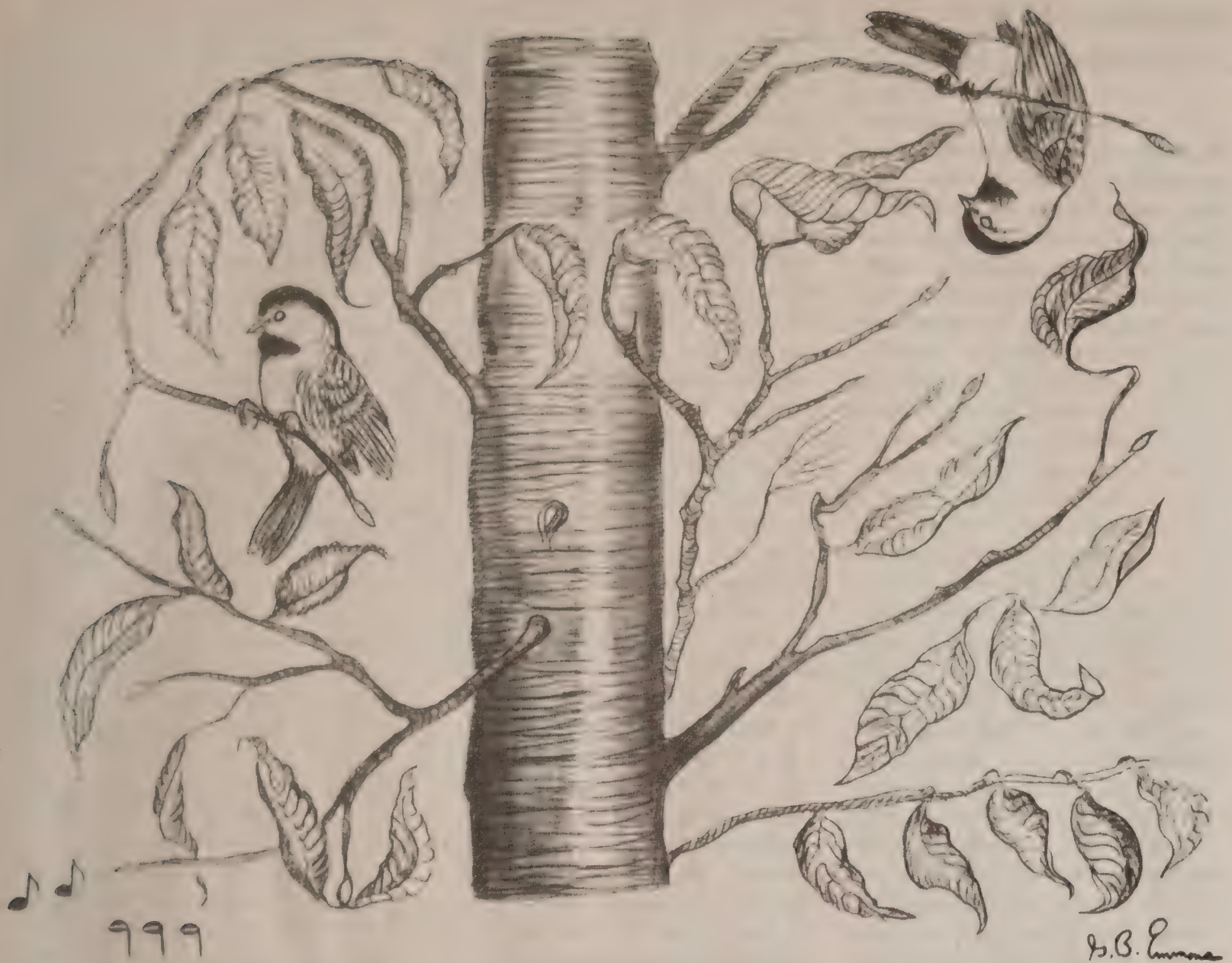
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Diane's Bridge, but this year it is almost impossible to go there, and I can't say. The mourning dove is always around our old house, and like the one in the Old Testament that appeared with an olive branch in its mouth to foretell the end of the deluge, I associate this species as uplifting in spirit.

*Doves in winter may roost in white pines head under one wing, waiting for the morn curtains of rainwashed clouds lifting at dawn.*

Even higher on my list is the red-tailed hawk, and I saw my first of the year on a late March day, soaring in circles of

warming thermals, higher and higher, until just a speck, when the glinting shorelines of Lake Garfield must have come into his extraordinary vision as he surveyed his predatory domain. As the frozen edges begin to darken and ripple free, I look forward to when the chilled stillness of the pale blue sky of early spring is broken by the distant clarion of skeins of migratory snow geese.

After the ordeal we perhaps all share, it may sound no less inspiring than the notes of Handel's immortal *Messiah*. While things are looking up, it could be said that the power of creation awakens with a song that calls from above. As in the first verse of Psalm 121 in *The Book of Common Prayer*, "I will lift mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help," and if there is a prophecy in the words, it seems to be on the way.

— George Emmons

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## Sugarhouse Epiphany: The Hophornbeam Involucre

We could be moaning about the late winter, heavy snow, and small yields in the sugarhouse. Certainly this has been, so far, a maple-syrup season of late, slow, sporadic returns, and anybody who is in it purely for the syrup or the money could be grumpy. We were daunted ourselves by the heavy snow and considered just skipping it this year. Hauling sap on snowshoes, digging through the plowbank to get at our tanks and tubs—we leapt to these projects more eagerly twenty years ago than we do today. (I assume. I can't actually remember this eager leaping.)

In the end we decided to go forward, to get out in the woods and slog around. Like everyone else in these parts, we haven't made much syrup yet (this is late March), but what we've got is pretty and light, lined up in glowing glass bottles. We spend our days tending the evaporator, doing that familiar dance around the cauldron: open a half-door, stuff in some wood, bang it shut and open the other half, stuff some more; stand up and circle the pans, tap the float valves, squint through the steam at the levels, pop out the back door and up the ladder to look at the holding tank level, then hurry back into the steambath and check the other side of the pans; wipe the condensation off the thermometer and rough-check the boiling point; if it's getting close to syrup, scoop some out and fill the hydrometer cup for a specific gravity check; if the glass bobber floats, stick close by and

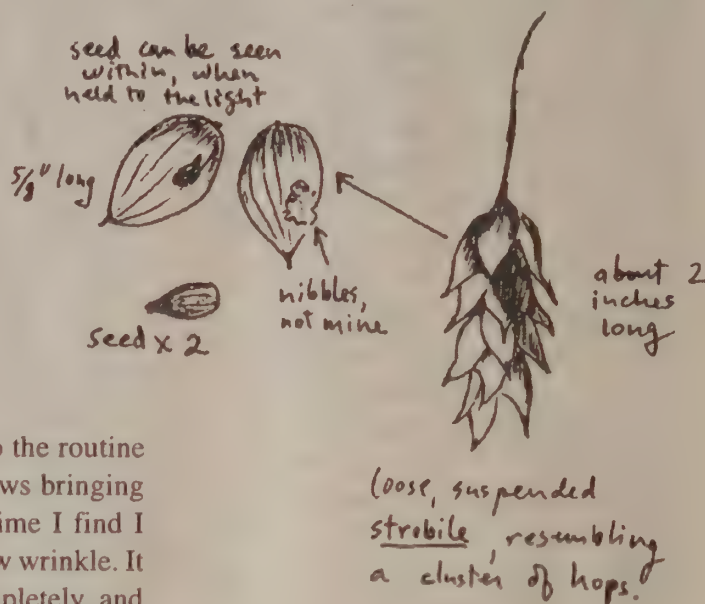
keep checking it; if it sits on the bottom of the cup, there's time to sit down for a minute. Then it's out to the woodpile for about four armloads of wood, and squat down, open the half-door, and start all over again.

This routine is as familiar to me as rolling out of bed and putting on my clothes in the morning. My daily rhythm would be completely weird without the morning routine, and my seasonal life here on the farm would be off-kilter without the sap and the steambath. There is a security (not necessarily economic) in knowing what my job is in March, and the choreography around the evaporator hasn't changed in twenty years. I *have* thought of working a wheelbarrow into the routine somehow, to spare my elbows bringing in the wood. At the same time I find I can't quite picture such a new wrinkle. It would alter the dance completely and what are the odds I'd fall over it, circling around in the haze?

Even if I can't scrape up the imagination to change my routine in the sugarhouse, someone else is always throwing surprises my way. This is old Ma Nature, the person in charge of snowstorms, sugar maples, and sapsuckers like me. Just when I think I know a bit about her ways and wiles, she drops something new into my life.

This time, she dropped it right into the evaporator. Well, to be exact, I put it

there. I'd left the steam flaps open the night before, knowing (as well as we can around here) there wouldn't be any snow or rain blowing in soon. The next day I went over and hauled them closed, using our splendid rope-and-pulley system, which is certainly nibbled up by mice but hasn't broken yet. The big wooden flaps came up vertical against the cupola and I tied the ropes to their cleats. This is when



I feel like an inland sailor. I can just about taste a little salt in the spray.

As the flaps came up, having lain out on the roof all night, there was a light fall of detritus into the pan. Unconcern from me: we boil it to pieces and put it through two filters later in the process. There could have been the actual splash of a furry or feathered body. I'd have taken notice of that.

It wasn't until the next time I fired up that I looked again at the bits on the surface of the unfinished syrup. There were little fleur-de-lis birch seeds that I see all winter on top of the snow. But there was something else, too—maybe 15 or 18 thin-skinned floating bladders, tan to pale tan, about an inch long and gracefully pointed at one end. They had slightly darker veins from stem end to tip. I picked some out and blinked at them. These little seedpods, or whatever they were, had never before been noticed by me in this sugarhouse, in these woods, or on this planet. Old Ma had tossed me a prize, and what a prize! I felt like the explorer who spies land where the map shows no land, or the guy in *It Came*

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*From Outer Space* who finds a spaceship crashed in the desert near his house.

Holy smokes. Outside on the snow by the holding tank there were more of these asteroids. I pulled one open and found a single seed like an apple seed. I thought of beech nuts and chewed on it, but it was hard and dry, too subtle for my tastebuds. One little paper pod had been chewed open already and the seed taken, by someone with teeth much smaller than mine.

Days later, after some happy hours in the woods and in the library, I know what I've got. These are the female flowers, with ripe seeds one per pod, of the American hophornbeam or ironwood. Fifteen feet from the sugarhouse there is a small shaggy-barked tree about twenty feet tall with some pod clusters still hanging on from last year. They look a bit like hop flowers, and sometime in April or May, according to the books, I'll be able to see the new crop of flowers on this tree. Surely there have been other flowering hophornbeams beside my path, but they had to be dropped right into my evaporator to get my attention.

In another two weeks this year's syrup season will be over. I'm looking at those shining bottles of amber. There are not so many of them, but they hold the invisible essence of my new discovery, my epiphany of March 2001: the membranaceous saclike involucre of *Ostrya virginiana* containing Ma Nature's greatest gift to the planet — a seed.

— Bonner J. McAllester



## From the Meetinghouse . . .

Sometimes I don't understand how I can be a young woman and a Christian pastor! Maybe you can't either. Sometimes the two don't seem to go together. At least, not when I look at the history books.

Here at the Monterey Church the pastor had always been a man, from Adonijah Bidwell to William W. Clark to Virgil Brallier to Keith Snow. Of course, pastors' wives were "on the job" just as much as their husbands. But women hadn't been called as ministers at this church, as far as I know, until women led a lay ministry here ten years ago, and until the congregation called me six months ago. Now, the Berkshires are richly blessed with women in ministry: Buddhist, Catholic, Jewish, Baha'i, Muslim, Protestant, New Age, and esoteric traditions. I know this, because I'm on the board of the Women's Interfaith Institute in the Berkshires, founded by Rev. Allison Stokes, which seeks to bring those women together for support and education. It is

amazing to me that only two decades ago a woman pastor was almost unheard of, and not particularly desirable to most people. (But I wasn't born too long ago. It doesn't take much to amaze me.)

Some people might not think much has really changed. There still aren't too many women feeding us a line from the Hill or in the White House, fixing the car, leading corporations, or taking a leading role in the Bible. And not enough men are responsible for childcare, nursing the sick, cleaning up, or teaching Sunday School. Regardless, time keeps moving us along.

Usually, being a young woman and a Christian pastor makes complete sense to me. My sense of the presence of God in my gut and all around helps me stay balanced. Almost daily I teeter, seeing the pain of this world, seeing the pain of history, wondering what pain I am not seeing, and what pain I might be causing. I think we all move along, from history into the future, on that tightrope. I love my history (and my herstory) — it helps me balance, too — running beneath this church, this country, my religion, and this big spinning ball of mud and rock! And I know from history, and even from the Bible, that everything in the cosmos is always changing: stars, land, creatures, stories, and religion. So, this world, men and women, and my religion will continue to evolve. Praise God! And being a young woman and a Christian pastor will be old news before long.

— Heidi Haverkamp

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Quilt detail from "Cats on Quilts"

## A Stitch in Time

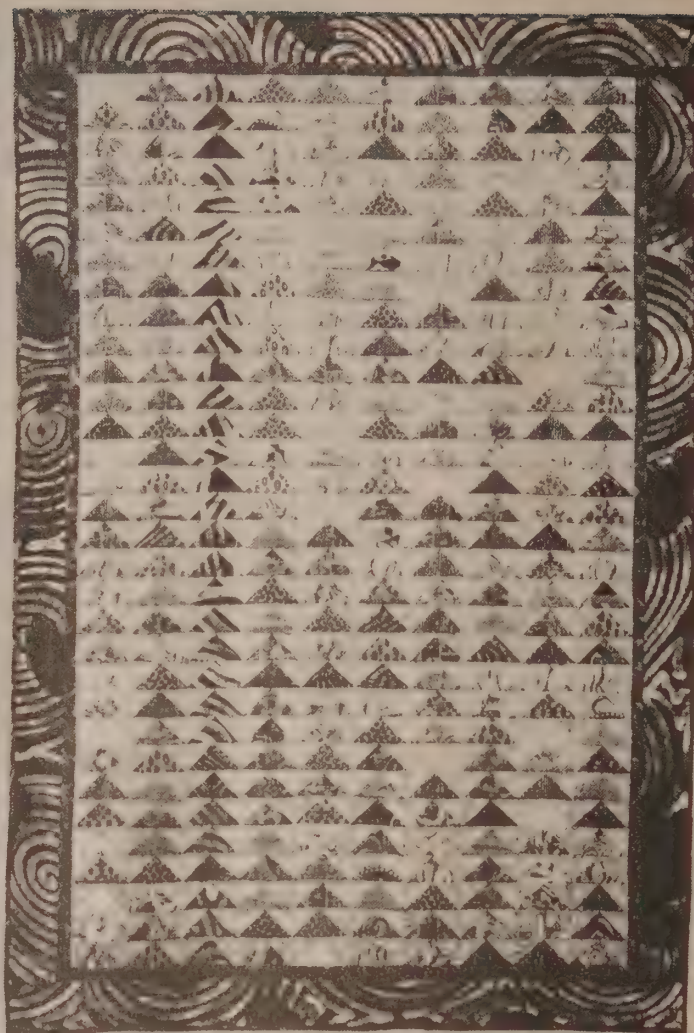
### *Cats on Quilts and Quilt Inspirations from Africa.*

Last month's column ended with a recommendation to take a look at Thomasina Beck's *The Embroiderer's Flowers*. If you're ready to read a little about quilts, either of these new books is good place to start.

*Cats on Quilts*  
by Sandi Fox (Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 2000)

This small book is crammed full of photos of eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and twentieth-century quilts containing images of cats. They appear in crazy quilts, in simple embroidered redwork, as the Cheshire Cat, and even appliquéd, sleeping in a pieced basket on a mid-1940s quilt from Nebraska.

A short commentary faces most photographs, including quotes from Charles



"The rainbow is the sky serpent that transmits heavenly energy to earth." —African proverb (from "Quilt Inspirations from Africa")

Dickens, Anne Morrow Lindbergh, a section of Christopher Smart's *Jubilate Agno*, and a letter from Theodore Roosevelt to his son.

Why cats and quilts? Why not? After all, the author writes, "Both cats and quilts are objects of infinite comfort."

**Peter S. Vallianos**  
**Attorney at Law**  
**528-0055**

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*Quilt Inspirations from Africa*  
by Kaye England & Mary Elizabeth  
Johnson (The Quilt Digest Press; 2000)

Described on the cover and the flyleaf as "a caravan of ideas, patterns, techniques and motifs," this is a book that delivers what it promises. Part One, "Africa: One Tremendous Adventure," contains chapters on Africa itself, the roots of African design inspirations, African textile arts and the specificity and universality of African symbols. Part Two, "A Caravan of Quilts," focuses on sixteen African-inspired quilts. It includes templates for appliquéd Adrinka symbols and gives symbolic meanings for African designs which can be used as quilting patterns. Both parts of the book explore many factors that make an African-inspired quilt specifically African in flavor.

Some of the quilts explore traditional American pieced blocks with an African twist. "Yoruba Dash" makes use of the Churn Dash pattern; "Sky Serpents" is made of lines of flying geese blocks, but they are made in what is to me a whole new way, and will be the first technique I try.

This book is loaded with techniques that will be exciting to quilters at any level of expertise.

— MaryKate Jordan

## Sandisfield Arts Center News

It's been a long winter, but we are looking forward to seeing our Monterey neighbors at upcoming events at the Arts Center. We've been working hard planning for the summer series and raising money for the restoration. We hope you'll come out and enjoy the programs, meet new people, and help save our historic building!

There will be a benefit concert/lecture on Sunday, April 22, at 3 p.m. to raise money for The Bill Crofut Arts Fund for Children. The event takes place at the home of Susie Crofut at 2 New Hartford Road, off Route 57 in Sandisfield. The program will feature Walfredo Toscanini, grandson of the conductor Arturo Toscanini, speaking about the composers of Toscanini's time period and their relationships with the Maestro. Songs of these composers will be performed by baritone Thad Shirey of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, accompanied by Elaine Toscanini (wife of Walfredo) on piano. Tickets are \$50 per person with limited seating available. For reservations, please call Li-ana Toscanini at 258-4904.

On Saturday, April 28, at Firehouse #2 on Route 57 in Sandisfield, SARC will hold a benefit auction for the restoration of the Arts Center. You won't want to miss this event! There will be antiques,

general items, and services for auction. Bid on everything from an almost-new kayak to a free antique appraisal to a bonsai tree! Coffee and delicious desserts will be served. Come at 7 p.m. to browse and munch. Auction starts at 8 p.m. and will be called with humor and grace by David LeBeau of Sheffield.

This year SARC offers the most extensive calendar of events ever. In addition to our Summer Series, several youth programs and special events will take place at the Arts Center.

On May 12 at 4 p.m. join us for the Youth Talent Show (Free). On May 26 at 7 p.m., T.A.P. (Totally Artistic Percussion) celebrates National Tap Dance Month (\$5).

On June 9, Anson Olds Trio performs at 8 p.m. Triple Play, led by Chris Brubeck, performs on July 7 to benefit the Bill Crofut Arts Fund for Children (\$25).

*The Stamp Collection*, a play by local author Val Coleman, will be performed on August 18 at 8 p.m. and August 19 at 2 p.m.

On September 8, George Preston of Tolland will perform in *The Worlds of Kurt Weill*. Don't miss the Robbins-Zust Family Marionettes at 11 a.m. on September 29 (\$5).

We end the season on October 20 with Brazilian music by Searles & Allen at 8 p.m. (\$15).

For reservations call 258-3309. Note: Kids Under 12 admitted FREE for the Subscription Series events.

This year, why not think about becoming a member and supporter of SARC? When you join SARC, your \$10 membership fee helps pay for the upkeep of the building, including electricity, cleaning, insurance, and general repairs. As a member, you receive notices of events and newsletters, and, now, use of the building for your own personal events such as birthday parties, meetings, plays, etc. There will be a small fee for using the building, but as a member you will receive a discounted price. A full building-use policy will be issued next month. To join, just send \$10 for an individual, \$20 for family membership to: SARC, P.O. Box 31, Sandisfield, MA 01255.



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## South Berkshire Family Network News

Drop-in times at Great Barrington site, 940 South Main Street, are Mondays through Fridays, 2-4 p.m. Please call for an appointment if this is not convenient. Families are invited to use the play room, clothing exchange and lending library.

English as a Second Language classes are offered on Wednesdays, 12:30-2:30 p.m. Child care can be provided with advance notice (2 days). To register, please call Jana Laiz, 528-3674. This program is cosponsored by the South Berkshire Educational Collaborative and the Family Network of Children's Health Program, Inc.

People's Pantry: St. Peter's Parish Center, corner of East and Cottage Streets, Great Barrington is open every Thursday, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Please use lower level entrance off Russell Street. Do not park in the driveway.

Toddler Time at Dillman Gym in Otis is being held every Wednesday and Thursday afternoon from 2:30 to 4 p.m. Families are invited to attend. An adult must remain with the child. This gives toddlers the opportunity to run, jump, roll hula hoops, and throw balls. For more information: please call Hesty Morley, 243-3187. This activity was started by a home schooling mother and is open to the community.

Support Network for Families of Western Massachusetts offers support groups, advocacy and education for families with mental, emotional and behavior disorders. The Great Barrington group meets on the third Thursday of each month from 6-8 p.m. at Hevreh, 270 State Road, Great Barrington. The group is free and confidential. Child care is available. Please call Crystal Ogert for more information, 1-800-894-2401 x5511.

Summer camp scholarship applications for children who live in South Berkshire County will be available April 1. This program is sponsored by the Southern Berkshire Task Force for Families and Children. Income guidelines follow those of the Community Partnerships, e.g., family of 4: \$6773 a month. Applications are available at The Family

Center and South Berkshire public schools. For more information, please call Susan Happ at the South Berkshire Regional School District, 229-8754 x387 or Linda Taylor at the Family Center.

The Family Network is sponsoring a Mommy and Me Creative Movement Class led by Carol Emanuel at the Chapel on the Hill Annex in Lenox. This is a class for 2 and 3 year olds accompanied by an adult. It is a half-hour long. People interested in such a class in Great Barrington are asked to contact the Family Center.

In the best interests of early childhood education, the Family Network is requiring pre-registration for the Great Barrington Family Center playgroups beginning in April. A Tuesday morning playgroup will be added to the Wednesday and Thursday playgroups. Families are asked to call to register for the groups.

A series of three Silly Science classes for three and four year olds will be offered in May. Jessica Redman will lead the classes. For more information, check the May newsletter and look for fliers at playgroups.

### April Calendar Of Events (Partial)

Events are held at the Family Center, 940 South Main Street, Great Barrington, unless otherwise stated. It is helpful to plan activities if people call to register. We definitely need prior registration if child care is needed. We appreciate your help with this. In case of bad weather, please call to see if the event has been canceled.

**April 2 and 23, Mondays,** "How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and How to

Listen So Kids Will Talk" parent discussion group. This group has been formed. 5:30 p.m.

**April 4, 11, 25, Wednesdays,** Sleep Issues in Infancy and Early Childhood led by Claudia Meininger Gold, M.D. MACONY Pediatrics. A three part series for parents to learn about and to discuss sleep issues such as: frequent night waking, bedtime refusal, and night terrors. Light dinner and child care provided. Registration required. Please call Family Center to register. 6-7:30 p.m.

**April 5, Thursday,** Puppet performance by Michael Wolski (William K. Whiskers) to celebrate the Month of the Young Child. 3 p.m.

**April 5, Thursday,** Basket making with Wendy Jensen. For adults or teens to create an Easter basket. \$15 for materials, some scholarships available. 6 p.m.

**April 6, Friday,** Single Parents and children's activity, Miniature Golf at the Cove Lanes. Pizza and fee for golf covered by the Family Network of Children's Health Program. Pre-registration required. 5:30 p.m.

**April 10, Tuesday,** Home schooling discussion led by Gail Felker, Tess Reed, and Lydia Littlefield. They will talk about their home schools, experiences, state regulations, community resources, and home schooling networks. Child care provided. Registration required. 6 p.m.

**April 12, Thursday,** Housing Discrimination Presentation by Luz Flores, Fair Housing Specialist, Housing Discrimination Project, Inc. Searles School, Bridge Street, Great Barrington. Co-sponsored by the Family Network, Southern

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Berkshire Education Collaborative, and Berkshire Hills Regional School District, 6:30 p.m.

**April 14, Saturday, Father-child playgroup.** A chance for fathers to play with children and for mothers to get ready for the holiday. 10:30 a.m.

**April 16, Monday, Clay Play with Jessica.** Children will have free clay play time, story, and snack, 10:30 a.m.

**April 17, Tuesday, Music Together,** a program for adults and children aged 8 months–5 years. Tom Hanford has been trained to present musical activities for early childhood programs. This program is also in honor of the Month of the Young Child and is cosponsored by the Family Network of Children's Health Program and the Berkshire Hills Community Partnership. This program will be limited to 20 children. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Pre-registration is required. 11 a.m.

**April 18, Wednesday, Nature Hike at Beartown State Park, Monterey.** Wear boots. Come look for signs of spring, hear a story and share a snack. 10:30 a.m.

**April 19, Thursday, Gardening Activity with children led by June Wolfe.** Story and snack included. 10:30 a.m.

**April 20, Friday, Nature Hike at Pleasant Valley Wildlife Sanctuary, Lenox.** Learn more about nature, hear a story and share a snack, 10:30 a.m.

**April 21, Saturday, Family Day at the Berkshire Botanical Garden.** A free afternoon in traveling through the world of plants. Each child will receive a passport and will earn a stamp for exploring different areas of the garden. 1–3 p.m.

**April 27, Friday, Gardening Activities at Gould Farm, Monterey.** Visit the greenhouse and plant some seeds. Hear a story and share a snack. Tour the animal barns. Wear boots. Park along the road near the red barns. 10:30 a.m.

**Fridays: April 6, 27, parent-child playgroup, Otis Town Hall, Lower Level, 10 a.m.–12 noon.**

Glynis Oliver



## Remembering Bob Curtiss

Robert Wells Curtiss, 76, of Mount Washington Road died March 18 at home.

Born in Egremont on April 6, 1924, son of William and Bessie Chase Curtiss, he was a 1942 graduate of the former Searles High School in Great Barrington.

He joined the Navy after graduation and served in the Pacific aboard the aircraft carrier USS Bunker Hill. During one attack, the ship was so badly damaged it was barely able to return to port for repairs.

Mr. Curtiss worked as a self-employed carpenter for many years with his brother Willard, retiring in 1990. He also worked part time after retirement and

was the transfer station attendant in Monterey until July 2000, where he was much liked for his courtesy, helpfulness, and friendliness.

He was a member of James A. Modolo VFW post in Great Barrington and enjoyed fishing, hunting and tending his gardens.

He and his wife, the former Josephine Czajkowski, were married in 1947 in All Saints' Church in Housatonic.

Besides his wife, he leaves a daughter, JoAnn Spaulding of South Egremont; two sisters, Wilma Vosburgh of South Egremont and Iona Seely of Fort Myers, Florida; a brother William Curtiss of Great Barrington, and three grandchildren.

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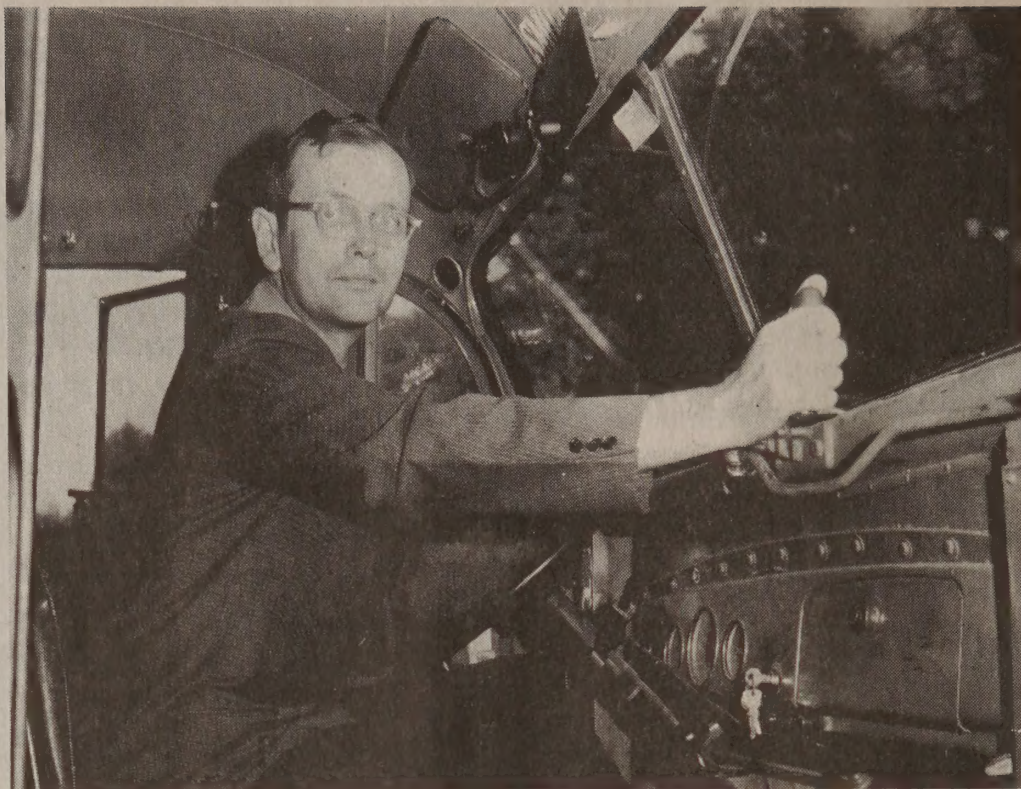


## Personal Notes

Oops! Two March birthdays slipped by me (and they are family members no less!). Happy birthday to **Charles Mielke** on March 20th, and happy first birthday to **Hadley Mielke** also March 20th. April birthdays include **Wendy Tryon** on the 2nd, **Eric Pedersen** and **Karl Quisenberry** on the 4th, **Tina Jenssen** on the 5th, **Bonnie Cox** on the 8th, **Scott Jenssen** on the 9th, **Andrew Doherty** on the 16th, **Maurice Stiefel** on the 17th, **Don Coburn** and **Lily Chapman** on the 18th, **Cody Funk** on the 24th, and **Grace Burke** on the 28th.

The second quarter honor roll for Mt. Everett has been announced, and once again nine Monterey students have achieved distinction. They are: **Penny Duryea**, 8th grade, honors; **Jessica Hupp**, **Adam Schoenfarber**, and **Carly Thomas**, 9th grade, honors; **Claire Mielke**, 10th grade, high honors; **Hannah Bracken**, **Kimberly Gero**, **Katherine Vallianos**, 12th grade, high honors; **Andrew Shaw**, 12th grade, honors. Congratulations.

— Deborah Mielke



*Ray Ward driving the Monterey school bus, 1956 (photo courtesy of Mary Ward)*

## Remembering Ray Ward

The Rev. W. Raymond Ward, 89, of Main Road, a former selectman and town clerk, died February 27 at home.

Born in Brookline on March 31, 1911, son of Willard E. and Adeline Wilson Raymond Ward, he studied dairy production, sanitation, and social science at the former Massachusetts State College, where he graduated in 1933. He later graduated from Hartford Seminary in 1937.

In his pastoral career, Rev. Ward served churches in Barkamsted, Conn.; Princeton, Maine; Monroe, Conn.; Mansfield, Conn., and Conway and Monterey, Mass. He helped manage a self-sustaining farm, Christian Mission Fellowship, in Genoa, N.Y.

He was also the farm manager and social worker for Gould Farm in Monterey for many years. He retired in 1976.

His most memorable years of service were in Monterey, where he managed Gould Farm from 1942 to 1946 and served the Monterey Church as interim pastor from 1944 to 1945 and permanent pastor from 1948 to 1956.

During this time, he was also the town clerk, selectman, clerk of the Selectman, member of the Board of Health, public welfare social worker, a volunteer Fire Department member and a deputized police officer.

He owned and operated the school bus for the town and was contracted to drive for several summer camps on Lake Garfield. He also ran a plumbing and maintenance service for the summer camps and seasonal residents of Monterey. He organized many youth activities, and as their minister and bus driver, he was well known by the children of the town. He was a member of the Monterey Grange for more than 50 years.

He leaves his wife of 67 years, the former Mary E. Black; three daughters, Leslie Paine of Sutton, Sally Pullen of Burlington, Vt., and Louise Henry of Williamsburg; four grandchildren, four step-grandchildren, and a great-grandson.

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## MONTEREY A LOCAL HISTORY

Edited by Peter Murkett, Ian Jenkins, & Kim Hines

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## Calendar

**Every Thursday:** People's Pantry, 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., St. Peter's Parish, 16 Russell St., Great Barrington. Free food for the needy.

**Friday, April 6:** Monterey Food Co-op order distribution and pick-up, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Meetinghouse basement.

**Sunday, April 8:** Full Moon.

**Monday, April 9:** Talk by Sean Donahue of New Hampshire Peace Action on U.S. chemical spraying in Colombia, 7:30 p.m., Friends Meetinghouse, Rt. 23 in Great Barrington.

**Monday, April 16:** Patriots Day, Town Offices closed.

**Tuesday, April 17:** Free blood pressure clinic, 9-10:30 a.m., Meetinghouse basement, administered by Visiting Nurses Assoc. (Please note the change in location.)

**Wednesday, April 18:** Family Network nature hike, 10:30 a.m., at Beartown State Park, off Blue Hill Road, Monterey. Wear boots. See p. 20.

**Saturday, April 21:** CET textile drive, drop-off, 1 p.m. to 7 p.m., Monterey Meetinghouse. See p. 7 for items accepted for reuse or recycling.

**Sunday, April 22:** Earth Day

**Friday, April 27:** Family Network gardening activities at Gould Farm, 10:30 a.m. Visit the greenhouse, plant some seeds, tour the animal barns. Wear boots. Meet near red barns. See p. 20.

**Saturday, April 28:** Square and contra dancing, 8:30-11:30 p.m. at the Sheffield Grange, Rt. 7, Sheffield,

## Contributors

We are grateful to the following people for their recent contributions:

David & Janet Cathcart

David Balberston

Eleanor Kimberley



Mass. Music by Mountain Laurel, calling by Peter Amidon. All dances are taught, and beginners and children are welcome. Refreshments at intermission. Adults \$5, children \$2. Information 413-528-9385.

**Friday, April 27:** Informational meeting to discuss articles on warrant for May 5 Town Meeting, 7:00 p.m., Firehouse.

**Saturday, May 5:** Town Meeting and Town Election, 9:30 a.m., Firehouse.

## The Observer

### February 26—March 25

High temp. (3/22) .....	48°
Low temp. (3/9) .....	10°
Avg. high temp. ....	28.0°
Avg. low temp. ....	15.0°
Avg. temp. ....	21.5°
Total precipitation (rain and melted snow) .....	3.69"
Snowfall .....	31"
Precipitation occurred on 17 days	

(It is interesting to note that the average temperature for March was over 2° cooler than the February average of 23.7°. For comparison, for the same period a year ago the average temperature was 37.5°, 16° warmer, and the snowfall was 2".)

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*Contributions from local artists this month: George Emmons, p. 15; Bonner McAllester, p. 16; Mary McClelland, p. 23; Glynis Oliver, p. 12; Thomas Yohe, p. 1.*

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